

Note from the Editor-in-Chief

The reader will notice from a glance at the cover sheet that some organisational changes have taken place in the editorship of EASTM. While I remain Editor-in-Chief, it is both an honour and pleasure for me to announce that I have been joined by two co-editors, namely, Mark Elvin, well-known historian and sinologist from Oxford, and Robert Horres, my colleague in Japanese Studies at Tübingen University. Now, and in the future, we will share the pleasures and toils of the editorship of EASTM, thus inaugurating an exciting new phase in the journal's life. Fortunately, as before, John Moffett from the Needham Research Institute will remain as the English Language Editor, thus continuing our seasoned and long-standing collaboration. The task of Managing and Production Editor has now been taken over from Vanessa Dahlmann by Katharina Markgraf, though not for long, as she, too, will soon finish her MA thesis. For the next issue of EASTM we will also re-organize the journal's Local Advisory Board as well as the composition of the International Editorial Committee.

This issue of EASTM also marks the beginning of another innovation, namely the transformation of the journal into one that is partly open-access, including electronic publication, a content management system, and permanent archival storage. "Partly open-access" means that immediate electronic access will be available to ISHEASTM members and thus EASTM subscribers. It will then become openly available to the public two years after publication. Moreover, since it is still considered good practice in the humanities, we will continue to produce a paper version, so that contributors and readers will still have a tangible, physical object in their hands.

The main aim of this transformation of the journal is to expand its readership, especially in those parts of the world where the subscription price, though modest, still constitutes a major investment for private and institutional customers. Another advantage of electronic publication is that authors can attach a number of additional textual, iconographic or even audiovisual materials to their contributions, which previously could not be included due to the journal's limited space or the non-textual nature of the data. The Berlin State Library – Prussian Cultural Heritage (Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin – Preußischer Kulturbesitz) is undertaking the necessary steps to bring about this electronic metamorphosis. An outline of the planned measures, as devised and to be implemented by Dr. Matthias Kaun, head of the State Library's East Asian section, will be published in the journal's next issue.

Besides a number of book reviews, in this number of EASTM we publish some of the plenary lectures presented at the “12th International Conference on the History of Science in East Asia” at John Hopkins University, Baltimore, July 14-18, 2008. These begin with the plenary lecture on “When Health was Freed from Fate: Some Thoughts on the Liberal Potential of Early Chinese Medicine” by Paul U. Unschuld, President of the ISHEASTM. By exploring a number of key concepts found in early Chinese medical texts, such as “fate” (*ming* 命), “heaven” (*tian* 天), and “law” (*fa* 法), the author shows that early Chinese medical texts were freed from the moral imperatives of various social ideologies, and were not interested in social goals. Instead, they promoted purely individual ends, that is, the adoption of the best methods to attain the longest possible duration of individual life by proper eating and drinking, regulating rest and activity, redirecting the flow of *qi* and blood in cases of blockage, etc. Similar to ancient Greek medicine, early Chinese medicine based itself on the assumptions that laws of nature exist, that humans were able to recognize them, and that these laws were sufficient to explain all the dynamics within the universe. However, a distinguishing feature was that early Chinese medicine did not link achievements in individual health care with a larger quest for liberation in society, as was the case in ancient Greece.

In his contribution on “How to Join the Scientific Mainstream: East Asian Scientists and Nobel Prizes”, James R. Bartholomew states that, to date, nine Japanese scientists have received a Nobel prize in science or medicine, all but one for work actually done in Japan. This he contrasts with the five Chinese scientists and one American scientist of Chinese descent that have received a Nobel award in science, though in every case this is not for work done in China itself, and with the fact that no Korean has received this prize in science so far. Two main questions are the focus of Bartholomew’s article: What historical or even recent examples of separation from the scientific mainstream can be identified in East Asia, and what have successful scientists done to transcend or overcome this separation. His conclusions are that there is certainly evidence that the domestic environment for science was, until recently, more favourable in Japan than in Korea, Taiwan or China. However, one has also to consider purely historical factors, such as when invitations to nominate were first extended to scientist in each of these countries. Thus, by taking this and also other phenomena into account, he remains not totally convinced that Japanese scientists are any closer to the scientific mainstream than their colleagues from the rest of East Asia.

The third plenary lecture published in this issue is “Art, Anatomy and Eroticism: The Human Body in Japanese Illustrated Books of the Edo Period, 1615-1868” by Ellis Tinios. Here he mainly deals with questions such as in which contexts the unclothed body is encountered, which modes of representation were used by Japanese artists when depicting it, and if there was any impact on them from imported, illustrated European anatomical works. One of the conclusions in this appealing article is that, in contrast to the Western academic tradition of drawing the human body from life in order to gain a clear understanding of human anatomy and to grasp, on the background of casts of classical sculpture, an idea of the ‘ideal body’, anatomical exactitude was not a primary focus of Japanese art during the Edo period. There we may find ‘nudity’ but never ‘The Nude’. In spite of the publication of European-style anatomical works, anatomical approximation remained the norm for Japanese artists, who wanted to capture the ‘essence’ of the subjects they represented, but not to reveal their ‘invisible’ inner structures. But while they may not have depicted human bodies as ‘lifelike’, the drawing techniques nonetheless allowed them to show them ‘full of life’.

In his article “A Philosophy of Machines and Mechanics in the Seventeenth-Century China: Wang Zheng's Characterization and Justification of the Study of Machines and Mechanics in the *Qiqi tushuo*”, Kim Yung Sik discusses the famous [*Yuanxi*] *qiqi tushuo* [*luzui*] [遠西] 奇器圖說 [錄最] or “[Selected Records of the] Diagrams and Explanations of the Strange Machines [from the Far West]”, a book illustrating, in words and diagrams, many Western machines and the mechanical knowledge on which they were based. This work was composed by Wang Zheng 王徵 (1571-1644) in 1627, based on Johann Terrenz Schreck's (鄧玉函, 1576-1630) translations of various European texts into Chinese. By concentrating on the prefatory materials and statements elsewhere in the text, the author outlines Wang Zheng's ideas and philosophy concerning machines and mechanics. Investigating such key concepts as ‘learning’ (*xue* 學), ‘art’ (*yi* 藝), ‘force’ (*li* 力), ‘weight’ (*zhong* 重) and ‘motion’ (*dong* 動), Kim argues that some of the sixteenth-century rhetoric and spirit of early modern Europe appears to have been transmitted to China, and that many terms were direct translations from the Latin expressions. Moreover, he underlines that the *Qiqi tushuo* was not simply a book for practical use, discussing machines and techniques, but that it embodied a strong intention to connect the learning of the ‘art of force’ (*liyi* 力藝) with Chinese learned tradition.

As a preview let me announce here that the next issue of EASTM will be unthemed. More or less ready for printing are “The *Rong Cheng shi* version of the ‘Nine Provinces’: Some Parallels with Transmitted Texts”

by Vera Dorofeeva-Lichtmann, and “A Korean Reading of Newtonian Mechanics in the Nineteenth Century” by Jun Yong Hoon. Moreover, we will publish Lee Jen-der’s “‘Laughing Disorders’ and Medical Discourses of Joy in Early Imperial China”, that is, the English translation of the work that won a Zhu Kezhen Award in 2005 in Munich during the IS-HEASTM’s “11th International Conference on the History of Science in East Asia”. For the translation of this long article, thus making it available to Western readers, we owe great thanks to the expertise and effort of Marta E. Hanson.

As usual, I would like to take the opportunity here to thank to all my collaborators, friends, colleagues, contributors, reviewers and especially the numerous anonymous referees from all parts of the world for their unflinching support of EASTM. Readers will also notice that we have changed somewhat the appearance of the journal, making it more aesthetic, and thus also in this respect more in conformity with its cross-cultural content. This change is also reflected in the new EASTM home page, which you can find under the webpage address indicated in the editorial part of the journal. All those who gave advice about this new presentation will hopefully find some part of their ideas and suggestions realized.

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